



Natural Resources Conservation Service
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November 8, 2007

NEW MEXICO BULLETIN NO. 300-8-03

**SUBJECT: LTP - CSP – GUIDANCE FOR EVALUATING AND DOCUMENTING
CSP/EQIP COMPATIBILITY ON PRIOR YEAR CONTRACTS**

ACTION REQUIRED BY: DECEMBER 31, 2007 AND JANUARY 18, 2008

TO: All Office

Purpose. To establish guidance for evaluating and documenting CSP/EQIP compatibility on prior year contracts.

Expiration Date. September 30, 2008.

In accordance with National Bulletin 300-8-2, FY 2008 CSP annual payments will be made this calendar year or next (in all cases by January 18, 2008), as requested by the CSP participant.

In preparation for making CSP payments, field offices should complete CSP contract reviews as outlined in the email guidance provided by Seth Fiedler on October 23, 2007. As part of this review, the Designated Conservationist (DC) should do the following two things to ensure payments are defensible:

1) CSP participants must be in compliance with agency policy on duplicate payments in order to legally receive payments.

The attached spreadsheet lists participants with both EQIP and CSP contracts, which therefore have some potential for duplicate payments per National Bulletin 300-7-01. This bulletin has expired, but the policies cited are still in place.

If you feel that a CSP participant is likely to receive a duplicate payment as a result of making this years' CSP or future EQIP payments, please remember that such payments are illegal. The simplest solution to prevent this sort of problem will likely be to modify EQIP contracts to prevent duplicate payments. Please discuss individual situations with your AC, ARC or SO to determine an appropriate course of action for any situation where you feel there may be a duplicative payment issue.

2) EQIP/CSP eligibility should be defensible.

Please add brief written documentation for each CSP participant with an active EQIP contract to the CSP file's technical assistance notes. The documentation should support CSP eligibility in light of EQIP resource concerns. For example, if a Tier 3 CSP range contract is also an EQIP contract holder, documentation should explain how various EQIP practices meet resource concerns above RMS levels.

(MORE)

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If your review indicates that there is a problem with an EQIP or CSP contract, we are responsible for making corrections before issuing another payment. Please contact your AC, ARC or SO to discuss individual situations as appropriate.

Per NM Bulletin 300-8-2, no NEW EQIP applications for CSP participants should be submitted for AC approval without prior AC and SO approval. However, for prior year contracts, DC need only prepare brief written documentation of CSP/EQIP eligibility prior to making payments, and do not need to obtain AC or SO approval.

If you have comments or questions about this policy, please contact Resource Conservationist Seth Fiedler at 505-761-4416 or the Assistant State Conservationist for Programs Norman Vigil at 505-761-4445.

/s/ by Norman Vigil, Acting

DENNIS L. ALEXANDER
State Conservationist

Attachment